



# Town Meeting



*Bulletin* OF AMERICA'S  
TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

Sponsored by THE READER'S DIGEST

## Should We Support the Establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine Now?

*Moderator*, GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

### *Speakers*

STEPHEN S. WISE  
EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER

MORRIS S. LAZARON  
CARROLL BINDER

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COMING NOVEMBER 22nd

We Won the War; Are We Winning the Peace?

TUNE IN EVERY THURSDAY, AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY—8:30 p.m., E.S.T.



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## THE BROADCAST OF NOVEMBER 22:

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# Town Meeting

Bulletin of America's Town Meeting of the Air



George V. Denny, Jr., Moderator

## Should We Support the Establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine Now?

### Announcer:

*The Reader's Digest*, America's most widely read magazine welcomes you to another stirring session of America's Town Meeting—the program that gives both sides of issues affecting your life and mine. Tonight, here at Town Hall, New York, four authorities clash over a problem that has caused heated debates for many years, and that today demands a constructive, permanent solution.

Now, to open this important session, *The Reader's Digest* brings you the president of Town Hall, founder and moderator of America's Town Meeting, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Whether you are a Jew or a Christian, American, British, Russian, or Arab, tonight's question concerns you. It's one of those un-

solved major world problems that today is crying for solution.

Should we support the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine now? When I say "we," I mean we, the American people, through our Government, either individually, or through the United Nations Organization when it is set up.

Before we begin the arguments, I'm going to ask our speakers to help us get the facts in mind. Mr. Mowrer, as a journalist who knows his subject well, who's "been there," as they say, may I ask you to tell us briefly how this movement originated and just what its objectives are. Mr. Mowrer.

**Mr. Mowrer:** Mr. Denny, the Zionist movement grew out of eighteen hundred years of sentimental and spiritual attachment of the dispersed Jews to Palestine, the land which gave them birth. Under pressure, a persistent anti-Semitism,



amounting at times to active persecution, a sentimental and spiritual aspiration became a political philosophy and a political movement. The Zionists feel that nothing less than a state of their own will give to the persecuted Jews complete human dignity and a safe refuge.

In 1897, Theodor Herzl founded official Zionism, demanding "A legally assured and publicly recognized" Jewish state in Palestine. Since 1919, the Zionists believe that they were given a legal right to make Palestine a Jewish commonwealth.

The mass murder by Hitler and the failure of the so-called Christian countries to give adequate shelter or protection to Hitler's victims, has made the so-called Zionist question a world issue.

Since 1919, Palestine, by the way, has been ruled neither by the Jews nor by the Arabs but by the British under a mandate of the League of Nations.

**Moderator Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Mowrer. Now, Mr. Binder, as a representative of the other side of this argument, will you tell us briefly what are the historical facts involved in the contention of the Arabs against the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

**Mr. Binder:** The Arabs and Jews differ in religion, language, and culture. Their social life and ways of thought are as difficult to reconcile as their national aspirations. The Arabs regard Palestine as

theirs because they have lived there, uninterruptedly, for thirteen hundred years.

When Palestine was liberated in 1918, the Arab population was approximately eight times the Jewish. Today, the ratio is two Arabs to one Jew. The Jewish population increased sevenfold in 23 years.

The Arabs believed they were promised independence in a series of commitments made by Great Britain and not annulled by any other American or international commitments.

The basis of the Arab assurance is that proviso of the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which reads, ". . . it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine." They hold that the Allied powers intended only to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and not a Jewish political state.

The more the Zionists have agitated for a Jewish state, the more the Arabs have resisted the influx of additional Jews, as well as the proposal for Jewish statehood. Seven Arab states, with a combined population of thirty-one million, are officially opposed to Jewish statehood. They have been assured by the President of the United States, as well as by Great Britain, that the status of Palestine will not be changed without consulting them.

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Binder. Volumes of facts have been prepared on both sides of this question, but with this brief summary, let's see how many more we can bring out during the discussion to follow. In addition to the arguments to be heard shortly from these distinguished journalists, Mr. Edgar Ansel Mowrer and Mr. Carroll Binder, we're going to hear from Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, president of the World Jewish Congress and national vice president of the Zionist Organization of America, and Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron, of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation, and one of the founders of the American Council for Judaism, the organization of Jews in this country opposed to Zionism.

We're going to hear first from that distinguished columnist, foreign correspondent, and author, Mr. Edgar Ansel Mowrer. Mr. Mowrer. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Mowrer:**

As an American gentile, I am ashamed of the monstrous massacre of several million European Jews by the Germans, for we Americans share the responsibility for these deaths. Had we opened our own doors wider, especially in 1940, several tens of thousands of Jews would have found at least temporary shelter in our hospitable land.

Had we made good our stated policy of seeing that Palestine be-

came a Jewish commonwealth, several hundred thousand more would now be alive. Their deaths lie upon the conscience of every American who did not do what he could to see that they escaped death.

Now that they are dead, we can at least make amends to the survivors. We can insist that they be allowed to leave the countries where they have been persecuted and return to Palestine.

In 1919, it became the official policy of the United States not merely to allow some Jews to settle in the Holy Land, but to establish Palestine as a Jewish state. You will hear that this is not so, that the Balfour Declaration setting up a Jewish homeland was ambiguous. It was not so considered in January, 1919.

The American delegation to the peace conference recommended in its outline of tentative report and recommendations that "there be established a separate state of Palestine; that the Jews be invited to return to Palestine and settle there, being further assured that it will be the policy of the League of Nations to recognize Palestine as a Jewish state so soon as it is a Jewish state in fact."

In March, 1919, President Wilson declared, "I am persuaded that the Allied Nations with the fullest concurrence of our own Government and people are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundation of a Jewish commonwealth."



Where is the ambiguity? Where was the talk of limited immigration then? Where was the sentimental gush about the rights of the poor Arabs?

In 1919, these Arabs were delighted to receive from the Allies and associates the independence from Turkish oppressors which those Arabs might not have secured for themselves for centuries in exchange for just one per cent of the lands to which they laid claim.

No, the discovery of these Arab rights was a later development based upon political expediency, fear of the Soviet Union, and a strong smell of oil.

Ever since then, all American Presidents and both American political parties have repeatedly pledged themselves to help realize a Jewish Palestine. Every pledge has been broken.

President Truman has promised too. Let us make clear to our President that we expect him to make good.

Ladies and gentlemen, our American hands are stained with the blood of people whom we could have saved—thousands of them. The time has come now to put an end to this craven and mercenary policy of double talk.

To our British friends who now rule Palestine, President Truman should say, it seems to me, just this: You say you dare not offend the 90 million Moslems within your

empire by doing justice to the Jews. You say that you do not dare alienate the sentiments of the Arabs living along your imperial life-line. Your new Cabinet ministers, who for years advocated a Jewish commonwealth, are now shilly-shallying just like their conservative predecessors. Very well. We have no Moslem population. We are not afraid of the hatred of a few hundred arrogant Arab bosses. We have small regard for peoples who during the first World War did next to nothing for themselves and during the second, with the exception of Transjordan, were neutral or active on the side of our enemies. We are willing and ready to share the United Nations trusteeship over Palestine until such time as the Jewish nation is ready for self-government.

We shall ask the United Nations to give the European Jews a green light in Palestine and to provide them with all the necessary assistance to get there. We are willing to offer them whatever temporary military protection is necessary against neighboring rulers.

Let us together end the wrongs done to the Jewish people. Let us in at least one corner of the world prove that our common ethics are sincere. Let us become the protectors of the persecuted, not their kibitzers. Let us demonstrate at long last that our common civilization is real. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Mr. Mowrer. Now we shall hear the other side of the case from Mr. Carroll Binder, one-time foreign correspondent and editorial editor of the *Minneapolis Tribune*. Mr. Binder. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Binder:**

If it could be shown, Mr. Mowrer, that the lot of distressed Jews in Europe would be improved permanently by the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine now and if such a state could be created without harm to the rest of the world, I, a non-Jew, would not be opposing the Zionists' proposal tonight.

Because the creation of a Jewish state would not relieve any considerable number of the 1,250,000 Jews still living in Europe, and because the creation of such a state may have serious international consequences, we should not support the Zionists' proposal.

A non-Jew who endorses Zionism acquires merit as a friend of Israel, whereas failure to support the political support of Zionism invites the accusation of anti-Semitism.

I first learned about Zionism thirty years ago from the late Justice Brandeis. I first learned about the disadvantages of Zionism from the late Julius Rosenwald. I have enjoyed the close friendship of many Jews in many lands for many years. My views may be open to debate. My friendship is not.

By their industry and devotion, the Jews have made homes and livelihoods for 600,000 of their brethren in Palestine. The 1,150,000 Arabs in Palestine have benefited by this Jewish effort even though they say they want neither the honey nor the sting of Jews.

But there are limits to what even industry and devotion can do in a territory no bigger than the State of New Hampshire. Only a small portion of the Jews needing immediate relief can be accommodated in Palestine now. Relief must be found in other directions as well as in Palestine.

The more violently the Zionists agitate for a Jewish state in Palestine, the more hostile become the Arabs. When I visited Tripolitania 15 years ago, Jews and Arabs were getting along peaceably as they had for hundreds of years. One hundred Jews have just been killed there. Why? Because the Arabs everywhere are oiling their guns to resist aggressive Jewish nationalism.

The Arabs forceably resist the admission of 100,000 additional Jews to Palestine because the Zionists intend that immigration primarily as a wedge to majority status for Jews and Jewish statehood. It is only secondarily relief for brethren in distress.

The Zionists say they no longer will obey immigration and other laws. The spokesmen of the official Jewish body in Palestine says it



will "no longer tolerate any foreign regime be it British or any other."

Rabbi Wise says the Zionists will resort to warfare if their demands are not granted.

Edgar Mowrer says one American motorized division and a few bombers would permit filling Palestine with Jews with none of that civil disorder President Truman has been misled into fearing.

This is the language John Brown used on the eve of the American Civil War. It sounds ominously like the prelude to what Seward termed the irrepressible conflict.

I cannot believe, Mr. Mowrer, that distressed Jews of Europe will be the better for removal from a continent ravished by war and anti-Semitism to an area where anti-Zionism is increasing and where civil war is threatening.

The Zionists deride Arab strength. Perhaps the Arabs are threatening, but I would not want to base American or United Nations policy on such a discounting of Arab resistance.

On the eve of the American Civil War a fellow Carolinian, George Denny, boasted the Southerners could lick the Yankees with popguns and cornstalks. Asked "How come?" after Appomattox, the Carolinian replied, "The Yankees wouldn't fight with popguns and cornstalks."

How can we be sure the Arabs will put up only popgun and corn-

stalk resistance? If the Zionists find Arab resistance too much for them, can they count on that American motorized division and a few bombers, Mr. Mowrer says would cow a million Arabs? President Truman says not. Senator Bailey says not. Even pro-Zionist Senator Johnson says not.

Political parties and politicians cheerfully issue promissory notes on assets they do not own in Palestine. It costs nothing except ill will abroad and it wins votes in doubtful districts. There are no Arab votes to worry about. But the American people as a whole are indifferent to those vote-catching declarations.

The politicians who pay lip service to Zionism would not dare risk the life of a single American soldier to force a Jewish state on unwilling Arabs. When the politicians take office, they assure the Arabs they have nothing to fear. The politicians are talking out of two sides of their mouths at one time.

It is time to cut out the double talk and concentrate on helping distressed Jews and restoring peace to the troubled Middle East.

I hope our politicians will stop deceiving the Zionists and baiting the Arabs and the British.

I hope the British will put Palestine under trusteeship of the United Nations.

I hope the United States will cooperate with Britain and the



United Nations in assisting the Jews and Arabs to live peaceably side by side in a land dear to both.

I hope we will intensify our efforts to make Europe again habitable to Jews who prospered there prior to Hitler.

I hope the United States will induce other nations, Arab and non-Arab, to take additional distressed Jews by saying how many it will take in addition to the few hundred thousand it has taken in the past twelve years. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:**

Thank you, Carroll Binder. Again the "yes" side of the argument by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, head of the Free Synagogue of New York City, president of the World Jewish Congress, and national vice president of the Zionist Organization of America, Rabbi Wise. (*Applause.*)

**Rabbi Wise:**

Mr. Moderator, my colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. Telegrams and letters have reached me from all over the country urging me not to have a part in this debate on the ground that Zionism had ceased, as it has ceased for me, to be a debatable and discussable question (*applause*) and, if I am here tonight, it is only because I felt I must heed the bidding of the democratic processes out of which has grown this Town Meeting of the Air.

If Zionism must be explained or must be interpreted, I would God that one man were living who could have done it supremely well—the late Justice Louis D. Brandeis, not only leader of the Zionists of America, but the friend of justice to all men.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask three questions: Who made Palestine? The Jews, from Abraham to Jesus.

Who unmade Palestine? The Arabs. They made of it a wilderness and a desolation?

And who have remade Palestine—remade it into beauty and fertility? The Jewish people.

I speak first, for a moment, of England. Why should we support England in the establishment of a Jewish state now? Why? Because England issued the Balfour Declaration. Because England eagerly accepted the mandate for Palestine. That mandate was cancelled in some part by Mr. Chamberlain when he was terrorized into appeasement of Hitler and the mufti. But, at the time, Winston Churchill and Herbert Morrison and, today, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Hugh Dalton, have spoken out vigorously against that White Paper which they have uniformly called a breach—a violation—of the obligation and faith of Great Britain. Britain has the ultimate responsibility for the establishment of a Jewish state.

Now, where does America come in? Why should America support this plan? Because every President from Woodrow Wilson up to and including President Truman has spoken in support of Palestine as the Jewish national home. In 1922, there was a unanimously adopted declaration in favor of the Jewish national home. In 1944, both political parties spoke out in their platforms in favor of the Jewish national home.

But over and beyond this, I say tonight—and I say it especially for the benefit of my colleague and comrade, Dr. Lazaron—of the five million Jews in America, I say four and a half millions would, in a referendum, vote today for a Jewish state in Palestine.

But over and beyond this, I know that the Christian opinion and the Christian conscience of America is absolutely with us in our determination to create a Jewish state in Palestine now.

And what is the need of it? The need is desperate. You read the word of G. Earl Harrison. Harrison said, "Let Jews go to Palestine before the surviving perish."

The answer to the need is only one—a Jewish homeland, a Jewish state. There will be no injustice to any man or to any nation. It would not be a Jewish state if the Jewish state rested upon injustice. We are too great lovers of justice. Justice, justice shalt thou pursue. We want to do injustice neither to

a single Arab nor to the Arab people in Palestine as you well know. As for justice, after the last war in which the Arabs had no part—I am bidden to stop and I stop. I don't go on like my good friend, Mr. Binder. I stop. (*Applause.*)

#### **Moderator Denny:**

Well, it's awfully good to have some Town Meeting speakers who pay attention to these little signal lights right beside the desk here. I'm sure Mr. Binder didn't quite see it or he wouldn't have gone over time either, but here we go. Now we are going to hear from another distinguished Jewish leader, Rabbi Morris S. Lazaron of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation and one of the founders of the American Council for Judaism. Rabbi Lazaron. (*Applause.*)

#### **Rabbi Lazaron:**

Mr. Chairman, my colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. I am in complete accord with Dr. Wise' moving appeal to save the remnants of our brethren. But I plead for the abrogation of the White Paper. There is no danger to anyone in Jewish immigration to Palestine, least of all to the Arabs.

Out of their desperation and moved by deepest sentiment, many of my brethren see Palestine as haven and home, and this desire receives universal support.



But that is not the question. We do not discuss a humanitarian issue. We debate a proposal for a Jewish state, and it is urged that with all our natural resources and our physical power, we should, not at some time in the future, but now—today—set up and support a Jewish state in Palestine.

Let us reason together on a very complex subject. Mr. Mowrer and Dr. Wise claim that we are committed to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. I do not so interpret the facts.

No President ever committed us to the present Zionist program. They expressed admiration of what had been achieved, as they might well do, and hoped that it may be extended but the present position of our Government was stated by Mr. Byrnes October 19 last. "It is our duty to take every measure to assist the victims of Nazi persecution. This Government's position has been that we would not support a final decision which would affect the basic situation in Palestine without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews."

Mr. Mowrer and Dr. Wise further base their claim on the assumption of a Jewish majority. Do the Arabs outnumber Jews two to one? Do they take the position that we should support a Jewish state with a Jewish minority? To withhold self-rule from the majority population until the minority becomes the majority violates all democratic

procedure and will hardly commend itself as just.

Vital statistics indicate doubt that the Jews, even granted unlimited immigration, would ever achieve a majority. The Arab population despite large Jewish immigration still outnumbers Jews two to one. It would take a Jewish immigration of 32,000 annually even to maintain the present ratio.

God knows I should like to see hundreds of thousands of Jews go to Palestine, but the extremely high Arab birth rate would make it unlikely that any Jewish majority, even artificially achieved, could be sustained for any length of time.

When one considers these facts as well as the fact that the Jewish state would probably be the object of economic boycott, ill will, anger, and would need military force to maintain it, surely it is not unreasonable to question whether our country should support the establishment of any state under such limitations.

Dr. Wiseman, head of the World Zionist Organization declared before the World Zionist Congress in 1931, "I have no sympathy with the demand for a Jewish majority in Palestine." Lord Samuel, First High Commissioner for Palestine in a broadcast from London, October 17 last, declared he does not understand, "how the immediate establishment of a Jewish state or commonwealth can be advocated

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**EDGAR ANSEL MOWRER**—Mr. Mowrer, who recently resigned as deputy director of the Office of War Information, is national director of the Nonpartisan Council To Win the Peace. He has been a contributor to American and English magazines since 1913, and he was war correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News* for over twenty-five years. Mr. Mowrer was graduated from the University of Michigan, and he also attended the University of Chicago and the Sorbonne, Paris. In 1932, he received the Pulitzer prize in journalism for his book, *Germany Puts the Clock Back*.

**STEPHEN SAMUEL WISE** — Founder and Rabbi of the Free Synagogue of New York City, Rabbi Stephen Wise was born in Budapest, Hungary, in 1874. He attended the College of the City of New York from 1887 to 1891. He received his A.B. degree from Columbia in 1892 and his Ph.D. in 1901. He has honorary degrees from several other colleges. From 1893 to 1900 Rabbi Wise was pastor of the Madison Avenue Synagogue in New York City, and from 1900 to 1906 he was pastor of Beth Israel Synagogue in Portland, Oregon. In 1907 he founded the Free Synagogue in New York City and has been its Rabbi since then.

While in Oregon, Rabbi Wise was founder and first vice president of the Oregon State Conference of Charities and Correction, founder and first secretary of the Federation of American Zionists, commissioner of child labor for the State of Oregon. At present he is National vice president of the Zionist Organization of America and a member of the World Zionist Executive Committee. He has been and is a member of numerous Jewish organizations and other groups with civic interests of a local and federal scope. He is the author of several books and is editor of *Opinion a Magazine of Jewish Life and Letters*.

**MORRIS SAMUEL LAZARON**—Born in Savannah, Georgia, in 1888, Rabbi Lazaron has his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the

University of Cincinnati. He also studied at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. In 1914, he was pastor of the Lesham Shomayim at Wheeling, West Virginia, and has been with the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation since 1915.

During World War I, Rabbi Lazaron was a Chaplain and is now a major chaplain with the Officers Reserve Corps. He is a member of many church and civic groups including the executive committee of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. He is the author of several books including *Ten Jews of the Ages* and *Common Ground*. He has also written many pamphlets and booklets and has contributed to Jewish and general magazines.

**CARROLL BINDER**—Mr. Binder has practically covered the world in his newspaper career. He was born in Mechanicsburg, Pa., in 1896, attended the University of Pennsylvania for one year, and received an A.B., cum laude, from Harvard. He started his newspaper work as a reporter and later as a telegraph editor in the middlewest and northwest. From 1922 to 1927, he was a writer for the *Chicago Daily News*, specializing on sociological, industrial, and political problems. He covered the Nicaraguan Revolution of 1926-27. Between 1927 and 1931, he was a correspondent in Italy, Soviet Russia, and London. Then for the next five years he was editorial assistant to the publisher of the *Chicago Daily News* and a writer of editorials on foreign affairs. Since 1936 he has been director of foreign service.

Mr. Binder has traveled extensively in Japan and China, Australia and New Zealand, and Europe. He reported on the war from England and Eire in 1942. During World War I, he was a member of the Quaker unit of the American Red Cross and cared for civilian refugees at the French front.

Mr. Binder is the author of *The New Negro in Chicago* and *If War Comes To the Pacific*. He has also contributed to many magazines.

as long as there are a million Arabs in Palestine."

Are there no alternatives to the Jewish state? There most certainly are, Dr. Wise and Mr. Mowrer:

(1) Continued and increased help for our stricken brethren

through private and intergovernmental agencies.

(2) A democratic solution, representatives of all interests involved immediately to be called together. The moving impulse of such a meeting should be humanitarian—



not political. The practical question it would face—how to facilitate as large a Jewish immigration into Palestine as possible without upsetting the equilibrium in the Near East.

(3) Open other countries to Jewish immigration, our own included. We have unused quotas from those areas where the largest number of potential immigrants are found.

(4) The whole program to be undertaken by some already established machinery, or one especially created for the purpose, the ultimate goal to be the establishment in Palestine of a democratic commonwealth with cultural and religious autonomy guaranteed to the different communities.

Such a program, my friends, would not alienate our friends. It would not unite our enemies. It would not divide Jews against each other. On the contrary, here is a program behind which all of us can rally. It will avoid the tragic riot and bloodshed daily in the paper. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you. Thank you, Rabbi Lazaron. Now gentlemen, if you'll step up here around the microphone, please, there are many facets in tonight's discussion and let's see if we can't explore some of them among you speakers. Mr. Mowrer, you haven't spoken for a long time. Have you a comment or a question?

**Mr. Mowrer:** I would like to ask Rabbi Lazaron a very simple question. On October 15 of last year, President Roosevelt, at Atlantic City, declared, "Efforts will be made to find appropriate ways and means of effectuating this Zionist policy as soon as practicable. I know how long and ardently the Jewish people have worked and prayed for the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth. I am convinced that the American people give their support to this aim and if re-elected I shall help bring about its realization."

Dr. Lazaron said he was aware of no American commitments. According to the Constitution of the United States, the President of the United States alone is in charge of the foreign relations of the United States. The establishment of a Jewish community in Palestine, insofar as it was within the power of the Americans, would be a part of the foreign policy of the United States.

If, when the President of the United States says, "I shall help to bring about the realization of a policy" speaking to his own people, that is not a commitment, then I would ask him how can we trust any President who makes commitments to foreign countries to feel that he is obligated? Or are we to say merely that a President talking to us does not commit himself but a President talking to a represen-

tative of an Arab state is committing you and me? I question that interpretation and would like to hear his answer. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Rabbi Lazon?

**Rabbi Lazon:** I would say this that if the American people were committed to every statement which all of its Presidents make, committed in the form of a declaration of foreign policy, I wonder where we would go. This statement was made under pressure of a political campaign. (*Applause.*) Conditions have since changed. I wonder whether the President of the United States could commit us to a policy so complex without taking into consideration his whole Cabinet and the leaders in Senate and House.

It seems to me that we cannot prove the fact that the United States Government, as a government, is committed legally, authoritatively by the declaration of any President to the establishment now of a Jewish state in Palestine. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Rabbi Wise, have you a question?

**Rabbi Wise:** Yes, I have a question. I want to know whether Mr. Binder read what I said. He said this evening that Dr. Wise advocated or favored resort to warfare. You must know that what I really said was that Jews will and must resist the exclusion of any Jew from Palestine whether he comes to Palestine with or without

a British certificate. That's what I said. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Binder?

**Mr. Binder:** Rabbi Wise, I read the reports of your address at the Hadassah meeting in Chicago about a fortnight ago and the quotation gave the sense that I find here. Now I have here a quotation from the *New York Times* in a speech directed to Jews everywhere who will be greatly disturbed by and alarmed over Jewish resort to arms. Rabbi Wise warned last night that the Jewish people in Palestine will refuse a minority status for settling in the Holy Land. "Those who will not defend themselves from enslavement are not fit to live," he declared. And then I go on—I won't take the time, but the sense of your remarks, Rabbi Wise, as reported—I don't have the Chicago quotation—seemed to be an incitement to armed resistance by the Zionists in Palestine.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Rabbi Wise?

**Rabbi Wise:** The same kind of resistance that your American forefathers—I'm sorry to say they were not mine—offered to the British when they insisted upon becoming a free and independent people. (*Applause.*) The interesting thing being that all these Christian gentlemen ask us Jews to be non-resistant and there are no non-resistant Christians, excepting for handfuls of Quakers and men like them, in all the world. We're going to



be as nonresistant as the Christian world is in the presence of wrong and hurt and oppression. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Rabbi Lazaron?

**Rabbi Lazaron:** I should like to ask the gentlemen on the other side this very simple question. Do they believe that the most important issue is to save and rescue Jewish lives or do they believe that the state is the most important issue? If the injection of the state idea into the program of relief complicates the situation, irritates many parties thereto, why inject the state?

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Mowrer?

**Mr. Mowrer:** I can only give a personal answer to that question. I became a partisan of Zionism only when I became convinced that the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine gives the only hope of the permanent salvation of the Jewish people.

I'd like to speak for one minute and say how I reached that conclusion. I was in Germany all the time that Adolf Hitler was planning his attacks on the Jews. By 1930, I became convinced that he and his minions would, if they ever came to power, carry out literally the murder of Jews wholesale which they were already promising. In 1932, in a book, I said

so. Unhappily, things went just as I had said. Hitler came in, they immediately started persecuting the Jews and we, what did we do? We talked. We said, "Oh, oh, naughty, naughty." And in '37, and in '38, and in '39, and in '40, we could have saved hundreds of thousands of Jews and did nothing. Today there are hundreds of thousands of them in Europe with nowhere to go. Palestine would let them in. I am for the Jewish state. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** It's time now for the audience to get in on this discussion, and we pause briefly for station identification.

**Announcer:**

You are listening to America's Town Meeting, sponsored by *The Reader's Digest*, America's most widely read magazine. Tonight, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, and Morris S. Lazaron, Author Edgar Ansel Mowrer, and Editor Carroll Binder, are discussing the vital topic, "Should We Support the Establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine Now?"

For a complete copy of this discussion, including the question period immediately following, send for the Town Meeting Bulletin. Just write to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Enclose 10 cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Mr. Denny.

# QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

*Mr. Denny:* As we begin our question period tonight, let me remind you that we're strictly limited by the clock. Last week, in my effort to get in just one more question during the thirty seconds before we had to go into the closing, we took a question from a gentleman who used up the entire thirty seconds in asking it and requested both speakers to be given an opportunity to reply. This closing, my friends, is rigidly timed and cannot be cut spontaneously without causing confusion and serious important omissions. Moreover, the question wasn't exactly relevant and had been dealt with fully in two previous Town Meetings within the year.

So let's relate your question to the topic tonight, keep them to within twenty-five words, and we'll start with a question from this lady right here. Yes? Question please.

*Lady:* This is addressed to Rabbi Lazon. Rabbi Lazon, you said that there were two to one Arabs to Jews; therefore, you couldn't see why there should be a Jewish state when the population so outnumbered the Jews. In 1919, there were about eight hundred thousand Arabs. There were not as many Jews as there are today. Because of the Jewish improvements in Palestine, there are today 1,600,000 Arabs. They immigrated from all

the Arab countries because they found better living there, better prospects there, better jobs there. Now, Jews weren't permitted to come in—

*Mr. Denny:* Is that twenty-five words? (*Laughter.*)

*Lady:* Hardly. Will you please tell me how there could be more Jews when the White Paper was created?

*Mr. Denny:* All right. Rabbi Lazon.

*Rabbi Lazon:* We are not discussing that question. We're discussing the question of the state. (*Laughter.*)

*Mr. Denny:* All right. Rabbi Lazon's quite right in that comment. Yes? The lady right here. Please limit your questions to twenty-five words.

*Lady:* Mr. Binder. As I understand it, the Arabs do not object in principle to Jewish immigration. Then, cannot the immigration be increased with an agreement as to the maximum number that would be acceptable to the Arabs?

*Mr. Binder:* I feel very strongly that every effort should be made to increase the Jewish immigration to Palestine and my main objection to the agitation for a state now is that it hurts the unhappy Jews in Europe who might otherwise get in. The more this is linked with agitation for a state the more alarmed the Arab world becomes—



not simply in Palestine but throughout Tripolitania, Egypt, and all the other places. That is why I believe it is a tragic error to join the two demands.

I also want to see Europe made habitable again for the Jews. Mr. Mowrer and I lived in France, we've lived in Italy, we know that the Jews were happy there and they can be happy again. (*Applause.*) There are many Jews who have returned to France in recent weeks and more will go because it's a good place to live. They don't all insist on going to Palestine. As a matter of fact, 135 Austrian-Jews in Palestine this week requested UNNRA to ship them back to their homeland, Austria. UNNRA in Palestine facilitated that; UNNRA in Washington turned them down.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. I see a distinguished legislator from the State of Connecticut back there. Yes, sir?

*Man:* To Rabbi Wise. I'm not giving you this question as a joke, I think it's worthy of serious consideration. Instead of displacing innocent Arabs, why not set aside a portion of northern Germany so that we can take care of these Jews who need relief and establish a state there?

*Rabbi Wise:* I answer in the name of the Jews in all the world. I'm very much obliged for your brilliant suggestion. I don't think any Jews ought for 500 years go

back to Germany to live (*applause*), the leaders of which slew six millions. Do you know that Jews don't want to go back. Jews in the occupied military territory—they don't want to go back to Germany, to Austria, to Poland, to Czechoslovakia, because they say, "These aren't our countries, these are graveyards, graveyards, and we shall not return. (*Applause and shouts.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Yes, please?

*Man:* I should like to ask Mr. Mowrer whether there has been anything in the experience of the Arabs in the past 25 years to justify any feeling or fear that there will be injustice done to them through the Zionist enterprise in Palestine.

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Mowrer?

*Mr. Mowrer:* For thirty years I have been a student of international relations. I have nothing whatever against the Arabs. I say, with what I think complete objectivity, that for various political reasons too complicated to go into, the Jews since the first World War have been the spoiled children of the world. They were given a liberty for which they never fought. No Jew, so far as I know—

*Mr. Denny:* You mean the Arabs.

*Mr. Mowrer:* Yes, the Arabs have been given the liberty for which they never fought. I'm sorry.

*Mr. Denny:* Stenographer, please take note.

*Mr. Mowrer:* No Jew, so far as I know, has ever wronged the Arabs. The Arabs were given 99 per cent of the territory liberated for them by the Allied and associate nations, and of them all, how many joined in this war on our side? Transjordan, almost without population; Iraq. On the other side, Syria, very questionable; Ibn Saud of Saudi-Arabia, neutral and profited by American subsidies for which he is still clamoring; Egypt, on the edge, ready to turn on the British any time when they lost Cairo, had everything ready to celebrate the German entrance into Cairo. No, they haven't been badly treated. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Rabbi Lazon?

*Rabbi Lazon:* I should like to ask a question. It isn't a question of ill-treatment of the Arab by the Jew, but what is the cause of all these riots. Where do they come from? (*Confusion.*)

*Rabbi Wise:* I know where those riots come from. I know who makes those riots. Those riots are instigated by the Arab League under the direction of a group of reprehensible underlings of the Colonial Office of Great Britain. (*Applause.*)

*Man:* I direct my question to Mr. Binder. Within 25 words, I want to make a statement and ask a question. Implicit in your address,

Mr. Binder, was the view that there was not room enough in Palestine for all the Jews in Europe who want to go there. Since 90 to 95 per cent want to go there, it becomes pertinent to ask you how do you reconcile your statements with those of the great American agronomist, Dr. Lauder milk, who says there's room for millions of Jews and Arabs in Palestine? (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Binder:* I do not know how long a time it would take to realize the reforms proposed by Mr. Lauder milk. Thus, we have a problem of the Jews at the present time. It seems to me, whatever long-range improvements can be made in Palestine, we must not shut the door either in Europe, Africa, or in the United States, to take care of the more distressed people. I believe that you are shutting doors when you concentrate on a single solution, the creation of a Jewish state which has nothing to do with this immediate relief problem. That's why I think the tactics of my Zionist friends are lamentable from the standpoint of the Jewish community.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The gentleman right here.

*Man:* A question for Doctor Lazon. Arab territory in Palestine covers one million square miles of the choicest land. To whom does this property belong morally?

*Rabbi Lazon:* Arab territory—will you repeat the question?

*Man:* Arab territory in Palestine covers one million square miles of the choicest land. To whom does this property belong morally?

*Rabbi Lazaron:* It isn't a question of to whom the property belongs morally, it's a question of who has the legal rights to the property. That is the point at issue.

*Mr. Denny:* All right. Then your answer is that it belongs to the Arabs? Is that it?

*Rabbi Lazaron:* Except insofar as through acquisition, through Jewish agencies, the Jewish holdings in Palestine may be increased. In other words, I feel it is utterly beyond the measure to say that Palestine is ours and, therefore, demand before the governments of the world that the Jewish state be created now.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The lady in the balcony.

*Lady:* My question is addressed to Mr. Mowrer. Have you found any basis of truth in the popular belief that Great Britain is the force behind the Jewish-Arab unrest?

*Mr. Denny:* In other words, she's asking if you agree with Rabbi Wise that the British force is behind the Arab unrest.

*Mr. Mowrer:* I am sure that the British have not taken the measures to still the Arab unrest which they would have taken had the unrest been caused by Jews or, conceivably, by many other peoples.

There is not the slightest doubt about the support that the British Colonial Office has continually given to Arab aspirations. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Mr. Binder has a comment. Mr. Binder.

*Mr. Binder:* I thing in fairness to the British it should be borne in mind that in another period when there were disorders there, there was a very gallant British soldier named Wingate, who died in Burma, and who organized the Jews of Palestine to resist the Arabs. He was an officer of the British Army.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. The lady.

*Lady:* I direct my question to Dr. Wise. Dr. Wise, if Britain or America and Britain reach a decision in favor of Palestine, will the Arabs accept that decision?

*Rabbi Wise:* Your question is perfect, Miss. The Arabs will accept a decision, but they will not accept an indecision. Great Britain knows that and that's why it doesn't make a decision. The Arabs are a people who know what law is and what lawlessness ought not to be. They do not obey an indecision. They will obey a decision absolutely. Now I'd like—may I ask a question, sir?

*Mr. Denny:* Yes, we have 45 seconds. Go ahead.

*Rabbi Wise:* For me or for the rest of the show? (*Laughter.*)



*Mr. Denny:* No, you've got to do the summary. You have 45 seconds now.

*Rabbi Wise:* I have 45 seconds. Here's my question. Namely, is it just that the Arabs, for taking no part in the first World War, got one million square miles as an unmerited recompense, six states, none of which was helpful to the British armies, and on the other hand, the Jews got a doubtful title—for that's all the Balfour Declaration is, as yet, until we get Palestine—to 10,000 square miles. In other words, we have one per cent of the great territory known as the Arab territory. Is that just to the Jews and is that not a great injustice?

*Mr. Denny:* Ten seconds, Rabbi Lazaron.

*Rabbi Lazaron:* I agree that there is much that is yet to be done but I answer Dr. Wise's question with another question. They have not brought forward clearly this evening that the establishment of a Jewish state would solve the Jewish problem. They have not brought forth that it would do more good than harm. They have not answered the question that it would challenge not only the present stability but the very future of the issue itself. Those things are an obligation upon the affirmative to establish before they can prove their point. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Rabbi. Wise, I'm going to let you answer that very

briefly now and we'll do away with the summaries. Go ahead. You have thirty seconds.

*Rabbi Wise:* Thirty seconds. Very well. I've only this to say and then I'm through. I don't care much for 100,000 certificates for Palestine admission based upon the White Paper. What I demand for my people is the cancellation of that iniquitous White Paper and instead of 100,000 certificates of admission, I want one certificate of admission for Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth into the United Nations Organization. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Rabbi Wise. We still have 45 seconds.

*Rabbi Lazaron:* I merely want to make this point that our chief problem is the problem of relief, that hope should be granted to the sufferers, that we should bring in as many as we can and not complicate the problem. We are in a new age, the atomic age. Let us in the spirit of Israel's universal prophetic mission and with faith in the ultimate victory of democracy take our place beside those who fight for freedom everywhere in the forward march of mankind under God toward justice and freedom. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Rabbi Lazaron, Rabbi Wise, and Mr. Mowrer and Mr. Binder. In a moment we'll give you the program for the next two weeks. In the meantime, America's Town

Meeting brings you an important message from the current *Digest*. It was written by Bruce Barton. He said:

*Announcer:* "I have heard people sigh at word of the Victory Loan Campaign and say 'I suppose I have to buy another bond. But I don't see how I can afford it.' This is just like saying, 'I suppose I really ought to start saving money, but it's an awfully expensive thing to do.'

"The fact is, of course, that you don't buy bonds. As W. B. Bachman, a Detroit writer, forcefully pointed out the other day, you can't spend money on bonds. You simply take them. They cost you nothing.

"My own E Bonds are nothing but certificates showing that the Barton family have made a deposit in the United States Treasury instead of in a bank or in a cookie jar. When we take an E Bond, we are merely transferring a bank deposit to the safest depository in the world—the U. S. Treasury. We put in dollar bills which are non-interest bearing notes, and we get an interest bearing note as our deposit slip.

"To take a bond is still a patriotic act. That alone is inducement alone for any American. Just as your money in the bank pays for loans and investments and all the bank's manifold activities, so your money in the United States Treasury helps to care for the

wounded, to end war contracts, to maintain Armies of Occupation, to bring home returning fighters, to prevent inflation.

"Your bonds brought about the mighty atomic blast that climaxed this war. Your bonds today are returning flesh to the bones of those who survived wounds or prison camp torture — men who played their gallant parts in the total defeat of our enemies. And yet you can count on getting back \$4 for every \$3 you put into a bond.

"So let's take another bond today. Take bonds regularly and hold on to them. That's about as close as we're likely to come in this life to having our cake and eating it, too."

*The Reader's Digest* returns you now to Mr. Denny.

*Mr. Denny:* Next week your Town Meeting turns to another major problem, a problem of national defense. As most of you know, hearings are taking place in Congress now on the question as to whether or not we should have a single department for our Armed Forces.

Twelve million men and women who wore the uniform of our Armed Forces in this war know how intimately this problem concerns them. Since the advent of the atomic bomb, all thinking people know that it concerns each and everyone of us. Lieutenant General Joseph Lawton Collins,

Chief of Staff of the Ground Forces, who led the American attack on the beaches of Normandy, and Hamilton Holt, president of Kiwanis International, will speak on the affirmative side of the question, "Should We Have a Single Department for Our Armed Forces?"

Vice Admiral C. M. Cooke, Jr., Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, and Colonel Bradley Dewey, former rubber director and chairman of the Guided Missiles Subcommittee of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs, will take the negative.

This program will be presented in cooperation with Kiwanis International whose 2,400 clubs are organizing Town Meeting discussion

groups at special forum meetings to participate in the nation-wide discussion of this question.

The following week, November 22—Thanksgiving in New York State—our topic will be, "We Won the War; Are We Winning the Peace?" Our speakers will be the Right Honorable Herbert V. Evatt, Australian Minister for External Affairs, Senator Charles W. Tobey, Republican of New Hampshire, Norman Cousins, editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, and Sergeant Ven Kuroki, Nisei airman and winner of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

*Announcer:* So listen next week and every week when *The Reader's Digest* bring you Town Meeting.







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